

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

Hackney's **OTHER** Newspaper

Fightback Protest outside as Council surrenders

CUTS MADE VIA BACK DOOR

Hackney Council's 49 per cent rate rise - the second highest in the country - was nodded through a stormy Council meeting on Wednesday 26 March despite a left-wing revolt. The Council leadership were at pains to point out that they were not making cuts in the level of services in the borough, trying to placate the hundreds of people who had come to protest against the cuts on the Town Hall steps. The truth is that the Council is making cuts, and that these are not just cuts in growth.

On 1st February the Head of Administration issued a memorandum to say that all craftsmen and manual workers would only be appointed with the personal sanction of the Director. Already all officer (white-collar) appointments had to be sanctioned by the Director. This extended the decision downwards to the semi-skilled and unskilled grades. This memorandum means that vacancies will remain empty for longer, and may not even be filled. This certainly is not just a cut in future growth - whatever the Council leadership might say.

Threatening

The Council meeting itself was really a rather tedious affair, and followed the usual pattern for the rate-fixing meeting. Chairperson of the Finance Committee Eddie Millen made a long statement with threatening references to the Iron Lady and the Mad Monk. He said that the Tory Government had imposed a £4.2 million cut in the expected level of Rate Support Grant. Another £2.6m was having to be raised this year because interest rates had soared and they were having to allow another £2.5m for inflation. Both these sums were due to the Tories as well. He said that if it had not been for the Tory Government then the necessary increase in rates for

next year would have been £6.2m instead of £12.2m.

Then there followed the ritual motion from the single Tory Councillor, Joe Lobenstein. He proposed a package of cuts which, he said, would have saved a 9p rate. But, of course, nobody seconded his proposal.

Then came the beginning of the stirring from the left. George Armstrong proposed a motion to increase the Social Services allocation by £250,000. This was opposed by John Paton, who is the Right's young rising star. He shook his jowls at the Lefties opposite and told them he was going to say a few home truths. This consisted of telling them that they had something to learn about loyalty. Apparently, the matter had been discussed in "another place". (This shorthand stands for the Labour Group, which meets in secret. It is very definitely bad form to refer to such an institution by name in the Council chamber.) Thus any councillor who raised the subject now was breaking group discipline and could expect a rap over the knuckles. John Paton is a "junior whip" according to Johnny Kotz who spoke later. Presumably it would be John Paton who would be doing the disciplining.

However, the Left were not frightened by this display and forced a vote. The amendment was then lost by 36 votes to 11.

Manoeuvre

Then the Right carried out their most undemocratic manoeuvre. They moved that the meeting would close at the end of the report from the Finance Committee. This meant that all the rest of the business on the agenda was passed automatically without being discussed. And, of course, all the



Hundreds protest outside the Town Hall; inside, Councillors vote for cuts. Pic: Clive Aldiss

puppets who never say anything, but who know when they have to raise their hands and vote, shot their arms into the air. Carried by 27 votes to 15.

Another Left councillor, Ron Heisler, then moved for an increase in the Housing Vote by £180,000. He said that if the vote was not raised by this amount then

there would have to be a further cut of £6 million in the capital programme. He complained that the Housing Committees had not

... continued on p.8

Blair's killers named as inquest starts

The inquest on Blair Peach, the Hackney teacher killed by police in Southall last year, will open at last on Monday 28 April, one year and five days after his death. The day before there will be a large demonstration assembling at Speakers Corner at 1 pm, which will march past Scotland Yard to a rally in Trafalgar Square. The march will call for the disbandment of the Special Patrol Group, the elite police heavy mob, who were responsible for Blair's death. It will also call for an amnesty for the 345 people charged with various offences after the events in Southall, where the local people were prevented from demonstrating against the National Front by the occupation of the entire town by nearly 3,000 police; many of these people suffered injuries after being beaten up by police while being arrested, some have been sent

to prison and more than half have had to pay heavy fines, been put on probation or face other penalties.

The inquest now looks as though it will be the only chance that Blair's family and the public will get of finding out who killed him. Calls for a public enquiry have fallen on deaf ears, and the Director of Public Prosecutions has announced that no policeman will be charged with any offence. However, leaks to both the "Leveller" and the "Sunday Times" have shown that suspicion rests on Inspector Murray and PCs White, Lake, Freestone, Richardson and Scottow. All these were in the van from which the killer came: some of them must know who killed Blair, though they are not saying.

In the absence of an official public inquiry,

an unofficial committee was set up by the local community and convened by the National Council for Civil Liberties. The report, which will be published on 23 April, the anniversary of Blair's death, is a comprehensive account of what happened that day, described by the committee chairman, Professor Michael Dummett, as the "biggest single disaster for race relations in this country". The report costs £2 and can be obtained from bookshops or post free from NCCL, 186 King's Cross Road, London WC1.

ANNIVERSARY OF SOUTHALL

PICKET
YOUR LOCAL
POLICE STATION
WED APRIL 23rd

DISBAND THE SPG

NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION
SUN APRIL 27th

Assemble 1pm Speakers Corner Marble Arch
March via Scotland Yard to Rally in Trafalgar Square
REMEMBER BLAIR PEACH

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STAYING ALIVE

With the City and Hackney Health District's overspending rapidly approaching £2 million, the working party looking into the future role of St Leonard's Hospital is unlikely to receive a sympathetic hearing when it reports to the Area Health Authority. The report is due at the meeting on 10 April, although it may not be ready until May.

The working party was set up to look into the services that St Leonard's should offer in the immediate and long-term future. While it has never been suggested that the hospital should close altogether, the operating theatres have already been closed, and the Accident and Emergency Unit is offering a very restricted service.

The members of the working party are AHA members and officials, doctors and nurses' representatives and community Health Council members.

Although it was intended that the unions should be represented, this has never happened.

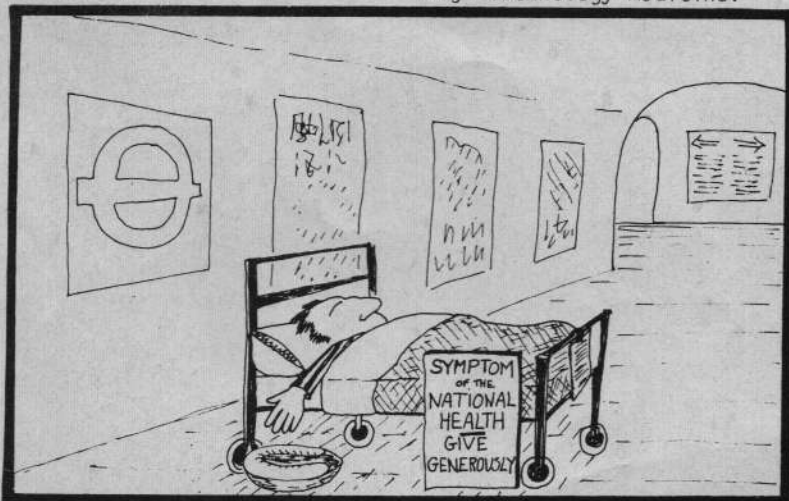
EVIDENCE

The working party agreed to take evidence from groups and individuals in Hackney. One day was set aside for this, and when Hackney Health Campaign (HHC) went to give its evidence in February, Hackney Under Fives, Task Force, local churches, Colville Tenants' Association, local GPs, nurses and many others were also represented. The degree of unanimity amongst these very different groups was dramatic. All felt that St Leonard's must remain an acute general hospital with fully-functioning Accident and Emergency services.

In its evidence, HHC stressed that the case for hospital and ward closures and general reductions in service had been made so far on purely economic grounds (money must be saved!), or technical grounds (norms for hospital beds per thousand population). Local need had not been taken into account, or even assessed.

MANAGEMENT

Without St Leonard's A & E Unit, local people will have to go to Barts in the City, or Hackney Hospital in Homerton. Both hospitals are notoriously inaccessible by public transport, and parking facilities are poor. GPs were also concerned about the difficulty they had in making and maintaining contact with Barts.



Many of St Leonard's past difficulties (eg, the provision of adequate anaesthetic and surgical services) have been the result of poor management, often in the face of pressure from consultants. St Leonard's must be managed locally by an administration experienced in hospital man-

agement, backed up by a District Management Team committed to the hospital's future.

It is clearly nonsensical to remove medical and surgical services at St Leonard's in order to save money, and to treat the patients who would have been treated there more expensively at Barts. In the year ending 31 March 1978, the cost per new patient at St Leonard's A & E Unit was £12.26, and at Barts £20.07. Cost per day of a bed at Barts in February 79 was £46.63, and at St Leonard's, £35.52.

PATIENT CARE

City and Hackney Community Health Council wrote to the "Guardian" on March 27 about the syphoning off of resources from local medicine into high technology medicine.

HHC has growing evidence that patient care is suffering because of the pressures on the reduced numbers of acute beds. With 250 beds already lost, and 146 "temporarily" closed, patients are being discharged early to totally unsuitable home conditions. A group of nurses from Hackney Hospital has written about inadequate staffing leading to patients suffering more bed sores.

Local authority meals on wheels and home helps are already stretched to breaking point, and cannot "mop up" the effects of further reductions in acute hospital services. With only 39 per cent of GPs living in Hackney, 52 per cent in single-handed or two-partnered practices, and 20 per cent over 65 years old, it is clear that GPs cannot stand any further pressures.

Hackney needs Barts and St Leonard's. St Leonard's must not become a dumping ground for Hackney's old people, but must offer high quality orthopaedic and general surgery, a fully-functioning A & E Unit with medical cover from Barts, the long-promised day-care abortion clinic, and teaching facilities for medical and nursery students.

FILM BENEFIT

The showing of "Coma" at the Rio has had to be postponed, and is now rescheduled for Sunday May 11 at 2.30 pm.

STOP PRESS

Following a mysterious fire at Shoreditch Health Centre, the Campaign office has had to be moved to 52 Navarino Road, E8., tel 249 8648.

A CASE OF EDUCATION

Hackney CASE (Campaign for the Advancement of State Education) held its Annual General Meeting last week, followed by an open discussion. The main speaker was Anne Sofer, chairperson of ILEA schools sub-committee, whose speech centred around two themes, improvement and information.

Basing her remarks on the premises that no institution would not benefit from constructive criticism and that no criticism is useful without information, Ms. Sofer spoke about the local authority's attempts to make information on schools more readily available.

informed

Work is under way at the moment on devising new information systems. Proposals include an annual report that would be issued by heads of schools to parents and governors, and a five yearly report that would be presented to ILEA, the school inspectorate and governors, but which would not be available to parents. Such a report would ensure that schools were kept continually under review and the document could be used by heads and staff

as a guide to their own success or failure.

In a general assessment of Hackney's educational situation, Ms. Sofer thought that standards had improved remarkably over the past six years - i.e. that the borough was now top of the deprivation league, but still at the bottom of the over-all league. She did not foresee any huge improvement in the future either, mainly because Hackney, unlike many other boroughs, is not being subjected to an influx of middle class children, which tends to raise standards.

future

Speaking of ILEA's future, and referring to the recent Baker report, she said that Hackney would not be receiving a high enough level of resources to enable the borough to run a viable education service, and that any proposed amalgamation of Hackney with other, also poor, boroughs, would be disastrous to educational standards.

a.u.r.

In answer to questions on ILEA's attitude to disruptive

pupils in primary schools, Ms. Sofer said that Hackney was, in fact, in a better position than most boroughs. Under the AUR (Alternative Use of Resources) system, schools in deprivation areas (i.e. Hackney) receive more money to fund the employment of extra teachers. Hackney also gets allocated extra "needs posts", additional teaching helpers. However Hackney tends to have a high ratio of these helpers to teachers; when the AUR system started there was a shortage of teachers and many helpers were taken on instead. Now that there are plenty teachers looking for

jobs, there are no longer many posts available.

The average ILEA teacher/child ratio is 1/28, but the better-off schools in Hackney have a 1/14 ratio, and the worst still only 1/27. In the special intensive groups for children who are having language or learning difficulty, the ratio is 1/10.

During the coming year CASE intends to concentrate on several issues: the proposed break-up of ILEA, educational provision in primary schools and sixth form colleges, greater parental involvement and the re-organisation of adult education.

corrie withdraws

Probably the most heartening news of the winter (the first long, cold Tory winter of how many?) has been the collapse of John Corrie's Abortion (Amendment) Bill which was aimed to "reform" the comparatively liberal 1967 Abortion Act. In reality, it would have imposed all kinds of severe restrictions on women, and made abortions even more expensive and difficult to get.

So all the lobbying of (male) MPs, and the campaigning, all the pressure eventually paid off. All three of

Hackney's MPs, Ron Brown, Stanley Clinton Davis and Ernie Roberts voted against Corrie on all the important divisions, and the role of committed MPs like them should not be underestimated. But many Hackney women and men took part in the lobbies and the marches, the campaigning and the letter-writing, and it is the work of these hundreds of people who really defeated the right-wingers and the Catholics. "Keep your filthy laws off my body" said one of the best badges worn during the campaign and, for once, the goodies won.



LEAD KILLS

Today, the question of lead in petrol is causing great concern. The "fall out" of lead from motor car exhausts is far more urgent than threatened fall out from nuclear power stations because it is polluting the air now. There are two grams of lead in every gallon of petrol used; every year ten thousand tons are poured out from car exhausts over Britain.

It is in the air and we inhale it. It settles on the crops, the food in the shops and the utensils in our kitchens and we ingest it. It is washed down to the sea and enters the food chain from there.

poison

Lead is a poison and has no place in the human system except as a poison. It does nothing but damage. The damage it does is appalling.

Lead in a pregnant woman's blood can kill an unborn child. One study on still-born babies showed 5 to 10 times the level of lead than in normal babies. A normal child should have none at all.

A baby may be stillborn or it may be born alive, but damaged. In Glasgow in 1975, a link was found between children in an educationally sub-normal school and lead leaking into a domestic water supply. It took the authorities years to put this right.

In Brooklyn, USA, a link was found between high lead blood levels and children with learning difficulties. They were hypersensitive, easily distracted and unable to learn. Where a high level of lead was found in children's teeth, the children were found to be less intelligent, and unable to concentrate. Result: they were unable to learn.

Yet high concentrations of lead are to be found in school playgrounds in this country, especially near busy roads.

proof

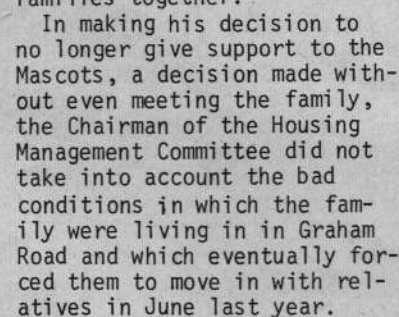
If lead was being added to food by a manufacturer, legislation would require proof that it was safe. The reverse is the case with lead in petrol, and it is being added all the time to the food we eat and the air we breathe. Proof is required that it is not safe. But why is no notice taken of work already published?

Investigation ought to be made in Hackney by the health authorities, by national and local government. If you are interested and concerned about lead and would like to help and press for further investigations, contact the Community Health Council at 210 Kingsland Road, E2, 739 6308.

The CHC is also holding a meeting on Lead Pollution on Wednesday 16 April at 7.30 at Shoreditch Health Centre, 210 Kingsland Road, E2, so please come along.

Sticky Situation

This means that they will have to leave their bed and breakfast accommodation on 1 April. On 28 March, Mrs Mascot said that the family had nowhere else to go, even though they had been given a hardly generous three weeks to find alternative housing, and therefore the children would probably be taken into care.



Also ignored when making the decision are other cases in Wandsworth for example, where council decisions have been declared illegal and contrary to the aims of the 1977 Act. In Wandsworth recently, council policy of deliberately splitting up "intentionally" homeless families was declared to be con-

Need For Guidelines

What the case of the Mascot family makes clear is the need for well-publicised and clear guidelines from members to be followed by officers in homelessness disputes. The final decision as to whether a family should be taken on as homeless should be made by full committee and should not rest with one member. The Broad Left members of the Housing Committee are pressing for this change. This would mean that cases such as the Mascot family would be treated in a more humane way. Any fears which Charles Cable may have about a flood of similar cases, where families perhaps deliberately left "adequate" accommodation to move in with their families in order then to be declared homeless as a result of overcrowding, and become Council tenants, would be allayed if such a code of practice were to be drawn up.

Hackney Housing Action Group, which is composed of a number of housing activists who live in the borough, took some direct action of their own last month, when they started distributing stickers like those illustrated here. They urge people fed up with housing cuts to ring council leaders and members of the housing committees directly and tell them what they think.

HOUSING—

Got a problem ?

Ring Cllr Charley Cable

985-1316

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to help you

This had a predictable effect on some senior members, and Deputy Leader John Kotz rang the Hackney People In Partnership office to try and find out exactly who was behind the stickers. He was told by PIP Information Officer, Charles Clarke, that the people involved were members of Hackney Community Housing and the Hackney Federation of Tenants Associations. Charles Clarke also told John Kotz that the only person that he knew directly who was involved was an employee of the New Islington and Hackney Housing Association, and he gave his name and phone number.

CO-OPERATIVE DEVELOPMENTS

The 31st of March saw the official launching of Hackney Co-operative Developments, a voluntary body set up by Hackney Housing Co-operative to promote new co-operatives, industrial and housing, in the borough. Hackney is among the first boroughs in London to set up a co-operative development organisation although Lambeth has been very active in promoting co-operatives for some time.

Prospects

"Obviously, we don't see co-operatives as such solving Hackney's unemployment problems," one of the workers told HPP. "However, we do believe that many working people have the ability and tenacity to set up and run

their own business. We are in a position to help them do this, and with the support of the Council's advisory bodies and other agencies promoting small firms and co-ops we are confident that anyone coming to us with a good product or service can succeed."

As well as setting up groups who are interested in setting up co-ops, Hackney Co-operative Developments will draw up a register of individuals interested in working in co-ops or participating in the setting up of co-operative firms by donating their skills or expertise. If you are interested, you should contact them at 16 Dalston Lane, E8, tel 249 8920.

Creativity

"People are put off the idea of setting up a firm with their workmates or friends because most of them have worked in an environment that stifles creativity and confidence," the spokesperson said. "The work that Hackney Co-operative Developments will do will attempt to break down the mystification that exists in business which will, hopefully, lead to more people

with ideas getting together to set up co-ops. It's a fallacy that working people cannot look after the non-productive side of a business; it's a question of setting up an understandable system that's designed to inform, not confuse. If you can add up, you can keep books, for example."

Grants

Hackney Co-operative Developments has the backing of a wide range of bodies and has been involved in mon-

itoring a feasibility study in the clothing industry, with the support of the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers, as well as working closely with people setting up co-ops in printing and a small firm manufacturing bike-trailers. "Grants and loans are available and the Council have adopted a very positive attitude to co-ops in the borough, and anyone's who interested should get in touch," Hackney Co-operative Developments' workers told us.

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HACKNEY CO-OPERATIVE DEVELOPMENTS

16 Dalston Lane E8 Phone 249-8920

Open day - April 19th - 10-3

outrageous

Kotz then rang the NIHA and spoke to its director, Don Wood, and attempted to pressure him into taking some action against his employee. The employee had in the meantime heard that this was likely to happen, and spoke to Wood before he could be summoned in. Wood was apparently not too concerned about the matter, but the employee felt that he might have had different problems if he had had a different boss. As it is, he told HPP, he will hardly be trusted inside the NIHA as much again. He has reported the matter to his union, who think that the action of a Labour councillor and a fellow trade unionist, is outrageous.

solidarity

As for Charles Clarke's blowing of the gaff, he was reported as saying that he told Kotz this information because he asked for it as a "political colleague". (They are both in the same Labour party branch.) Such is what passes for solidarity in Hackney Central these days....

NALGO SETTLE FOR 13%

Hackney Council now has no fear that the massive 49% rates increase, passed at the last full Council meeting (March 26th), will be delayed. The 1900 members of the National and Local Government Officers' Association (NALGO) who work for the Council, have been told not to carry out their threat to black the processing of rates demands and to accept the 13% pay settlement agreed between the union and their employers.

The proposed industrial action, which would in effect have prevented local authorities from collecting the new rates and would also have included the blacking of work with private contractors, was called for by the NALGO National Executive because the employers' body had failed to honour the results of the comparability study into local government staffs pay. However, after recent negotiations the employers amended their previous offer and on 27th March an average 13% increase was agreed upon.

Agreed

The settlement, which will be backdated to 1st January, is part of the council employees' 1979 pay claim. Last June, despite criticism from a lot of members, NALGO agreed to a 9.5% rise on condition that a comparability study be carried out jointly by representatives of the union and the employers' bodies (including the London Boroughs Association, of which Hackney Council is a member). The study found that, for local government white collar workers' salaries to come into line with those of professional, technical and clerical workers in

private industry, they would have to be increased by between 10% and 22%.

The employers' body responded to these findings by making an offer of between 6% and 12% (an average rise of 8%).

"Welching"

Joe Noble, Secretary of Hackney NALGO branch, pointed out that the union was quite satisfied with the findings of the comparability study, but that the dispute had arisen over the employers' side "welching" over its recommendations. The 8% offer was seen as a dismissal by the employers of the comparability report's accuracy. In addition, many local authorities had set aside enough money to finance a 14% wage settlement.

In reaction to this, NALGO instructed its members to take selective action, aimed at disrupting the council machinery without directly harming the public. They decided to:

- * black all work relating to rate collection (i.e. not processing rate demands through the computer);

- * black all work with private consultants and contractors, and outside agencies; however, this would not affect the work of sub-contractors which would lead to the suspension of Direct Works projects.

Other action was to include not dealing with councillors' personal expenditure claims and refusing to send statistical data to central government.

Support for the action was solid, both nationally and in the borough, even among the more traditionally

moderate sections of council staff. A spokesperson for Hackney Council said that the council "supported NALGO members in their claim for an increase in salary" and that they were waiting for the employers' body to reach an agreement with the union.

It seemed that the threat of action was enough. The revised offer, agreed on 27th March, was only a few percent. Short of the recommendations: an overall increase of 13%, ranging from 9.5%, to 18% for senior grades. A NALGO official handout assured its members that the new deal was "a substantial improvement on the employers' previous offer of 6% - 12%", and recommended that "in view of the settlement there should be a speedy return to normal working."

Weapon

The significance of the proposed action is that, if it had been carried out for some length of time, it would have highlighted the Government's intransigent attitude over refusing to increase the Rate Support Grant to local authorities, and it may have proved a useful weapon in an anti-cuts campaign. NALGO has a policy of resisting cuts in jobs and services, but is unlikely to take action purely against massive rates increases, even though such increases would, in effect, reduce the real wages of its members living in the borough. It will be interesting to see how the Government reacts to the 1980 pay claim which NALGO will put forward this summer.

Mitchell: 'We have no views'

Relations between Hackney Commission for Racial Equality and local police commander David Mitchell took several turns for the worse last month. This started with a meeting on 6 March between CRE members and officers and Commander Mitchell, after which members of the CRE delegation said: "There was no way of getting through to him at all. He was impossible to communicate with."

Cdr Mitchell's attitude throughout the discussions was to imply that the Hackney CRE was some sort of self-elected body, with no responsibility to the community. He told them that they had no business making comments about policing methods, despite their evidence that it was saturation policing of the kind that Mitchell uses that damages community relations in the borough. The CRE was particularly concerned about the role of the Special Patrol Group, who had been drafted into the borough in January without anyone outside the force being informed.

The CRE has had a definite increase in the number of cases of alleged police misbehaviour reported to it in the six months since Mitchell took over as the local divisional commander. They have had several instances reported of people being stopped and searched by men who have



not identified themselves as police, and of whole families who are systematically harassed.

Readers may recall that Mitchell had caused a storm in an earlier posting in Islington when he described the National Front as being "the only party that speaks up for Britain" and defended the police use of the "sus" law, which is daily used against young black people. These remarks were reported in the "Evening Standard" and he has never denied them.

Since he came to Hackney, he has not expressed such views again - at least not in public. However, he told the CRE at their meeting that "politics does not come into policing. We have no views." He presumably only sees politics coming into policing when his own views are questioned.

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- ☒ PRODUCES A DAILY PAPER OF THE LEFT
- ☒ FIGHTS FOR REAL DEMOCRACY

.....and much more besides. The Communist Party in Hackney has 350 members, involved in many campaigns, movements and unions. The Communist Party in Britain has 20,000 members active in all the people's movements. We need more members to campaign more effectively, to learn from, to help us strengthen and unite the working class, the left, the community organisations and all who care for democracy, for people's rights, for socialism. The attacks of this Tory government, and the right-wing performance of the last labour government shows that we need a strong Communist Party to win socialism in Britain. Now is the time to join.

Join the Communist Party. Write, phone or send this form to: David Green, Secretary Hackney Communist Party, 126 Amhurst Road, E.8. tel. 249-6374.

I wish to join/know more about the Communist Party.

Name.....

Address.....

.....(tel. no. if any).....

ANOTHER SENSE OF IRELAND

The exhibition of photographs of Northern Ireland "Bringing It All Back Home" is being shown in Centerprise from 15 April to 5 May. This comprises pictures of slum housing, unemployment, the army and demonstrations and concludes with a section on crowd control and surveillance and how the forces of law and order are bringing their experience and techniques back to the mainland.

To complement this two events have been arranged during April:

CURIOUS JOURNEY - banned from British television. Ken Giffith's film, originally made for Harlech TV was banned after it was completed. Thursday 17 April, 7.30pm.

STATE SURVEILLANCE - meeting with speakers on the army and surveillance and the redevelopment of Derry in the context of war. Thursday 24 April, 7.30pm.



IN COMMON.

The newsletter of the co-operative movement in Hackney.

No.1

CO-OP DEVELOPMENT AGENCY LAUNCHED

OPEN DAY 29th APRIL

Hackney is moving into the mainstream of co-operative growth in the U.K. With the setting up of a local co-op development group in the borough. Hackney Co-operative Developments — promoted and supported by a wide range of organizations from the co-op movement, the Trade Unions, voluntary organizations and the local council — is opening its doors for business.

All over the country, working people are realizing that they can form co-ops of their own to provide themselves with employment, to control their own jobs and conditions of work, to obtain housing and accommodation, to provide themselves with needed services, and to develop the communities in which they live. Hackney Co-operative Developments has been set up to work together with people wanting to form co-ops of their own in the borough and to provide support and information to new and established co-op ventures.

The importance of co-ops and the benefits they offered to ordinary people were recognised first 200 years ago. But it was a group of working people in Rochdale, 150 years ago, who objected to the high prices charged for food by local traders, who set up the first co-op shop. The co-op was such a success and grew so rapidly that almost everyone today can enjoy the benefits of shopping at their local co-op store. Many thousands of people have now taken over the co-op idea to open factories and workshops in which all the people employed run the business together. Such workers' co-ops are being set up at the rate of two a week in Britain at the present time.

Local co-ops cannot be expected to solve the country's economic ills — that would be unrealistic. What we can hope for is that workers' co-ops — owned and run by the people who work in them, and formed on their initiative — will develop into a dynamic sector in the local economy and create much needed employment.

The initial benefit may well be greatest for those who are now unemployed or facing redundancy, and for the most disadvantaged groups — ethnic minorities, young people, and women — in particular.

Long term growth is expected in the Co-operative sector in Hackney. The new co-ops will respond to and meet the needs of a wide range of people because they will be owned and managed by those who are employed in them.

As yet, Hackney does not have many workers' co-ops, but with Hackney Co-operative Developments now operating in the borough the co-op sector should develop rapidly. The idea to set up this local development group came from Hackney Housing Co-op, and the council via Inner City Partnership has given financial support. Hackney Trades Council, the Co-op Party, national co-operative organizations, and representatives of the council are all involved in supporting the management of the group.

Local Initiatives

The co-operative initiative in Hackney has come at a time when the need for action on unemployment and economic decline in the borough is greater than ever before. The recent redundancies at Lesney's and Quality Shoes are only the tip of the iceberg. Redundancies, closures and short-time working are being announced almost daily. The clothing industry which has long been one of the chief sources of employment for Hackney people is in the middle of the deepest recession in living memory.

This is a time when working people in Hackney and all those concerned with the economic future of the borough must seek out new approaches to the problem of unemployment. The government is committed to non-intervention in the economy and there are no signs that private industry is going to undertake substantial expansion in the near future — in fact further contractions seem to be on the cards. So action now will have to come from within the borough.

COMMITTED COUNCIL



Mr. John Collins of the Hackney Economic Development Unit.

Hackney Council makes grants and loans to co-operatives and other firms working or starting up in the borough. John Collins, the Industrial Liaison Officer at the Hackney Economic Development Unit, spoke to Hackney Co-operative Developments about the council's scheme.

In 1979, which was the first year for the scheme, there were 42 applicants, 18 of which were successful. Of these, seven were new-start firms and one was a co-operative. When the scheme started new-start enterprises were not expected to come

forward but Mr Collins is encouraged that the EDU has been able to help so many.

Co-ops and small firms are treated the same by the EDU when they apply. "The council is empowered to give assistance to any firm that can show itself to be viable and give long-term employment", Mr Collins said, "but in fact co-ops are in a better position than small firms in that they are eligible for a setting-up grant of £1,000, whereas small firms are not. This can be very useful in that difficult period of setting-up as it can pay for legal expenses, accountants' fees, and registration fees".

When asked about the future for co-ops in the present period of economic decline, Mr Collins emphasised the need to establish and build a market for the product. "I don't doubt the ability of people coming in here to make something", he said, "what is more difficult to establish is their ability to sell it". The council has already taken some action on marketing and Mr Collins drew attention to the success of the council in tapping the social awareness of the big national names in the private sector by getting them to adopt policies of their own towards the inner city areas. He would like "to see a similar commitment from the giants in the co-op movement — the Co-operative Wholesale Society, the London Co-operative Society, and Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society." These are the big co-operative organisations in the retail trade and "their expertise could be of enormous value".

Co-ops can obtain a £1,000 setting-up grant and a one year rent grant from the council and "these have up to now been allocated on a first-come first-served basis". Mr Collins went on to say that "when the stage is reached where there are more applications than funds to meet them we may have to introduce some rationing devices. But we are not really at that stage yet; we are still within the ceiling. There may be certain categories that we would favour but this is a policy decision for the councillors. The deputy leader of the council in particular is very keen indeed that we should do a lot to help co-ops. At the moment the problems is getting applications. We have not had many yet; to some extent people are knocking on an open door".

Encouraging news indeed for co-ops and HCD! Mr Collins is enthusiastic about the role that HCD can play in a borough like Hackney. "From the outset I regarded HCD as our local Co-operative Development Agency", he said, "I feel that the kind of people who are likely to form co-ops are going to feel more at home than they would knocking on the door of the council. In many ways I rely on HCD to provide expertise on the co-op sector".

DID YOU KNOW?

The government and the local council have allocated funds to set up co-operatives. Assistance with initial costs and rent is available, so too is the experience of a number of specialist business and co-operative agencies.

Hackney Co-operative Developments was set up to help promote co-operative ventures in the Borough. If you are interested in the idea of co-operatives or want to know more about the way they work, Hackney Co-operative Developments can help. If you want to set up a co-op we can assist with advice on finance, feasibility, location of premises and business.

Open Day Saturday April 29th 10am to 4pm.

**HACKNEY
CO-OPERATIVE DEVELOPMENTS
16 Dalston Lane E8.**

Phone 249 8920

FIRST CO-OP NURSERY? INDUSTRIAL CO-OPS EXPLAINED.

The Hoxton Community Nursery Campaign was launched over two years ago by a group of local mothers living around the Hoxton Market area. Mothers, Child-minders, teachers and community workers in the neighbourhood all agreed there was a desperate lack of facilities for Under Fives. Their aim is to set up a nursery for babies and small children run by a co-op of parents, staff and local workers, it was felt that such a project would provide care for children confined to high rise flats; enable some mothers to work knowing their children were safe, and provide a community base for local people. The essence of the scheme was that it should be run for and by local people and so encourage neighbourhood pride.



Looking for somewhere to play in Hoxton.

The group, which has been meeting weekly at Hoxton Hall, found a site next to Burbage school. The Inner London Education Authority and the Headmistress were consulted and backed the scheme. Hackney Councillors were persuaded that there was a good case for a nursery and agreed to build and fund it. Plans were drawn up and approved by the architects department and tenders were invited for the building.

Then the Council drew up its budget for 80/81. They decided they could not afford the running costs of a new nursery, and because of this there was no point in going ahead with the building. What they did agree was that if running costs could be met from another source, the council would provide the building. At this point Hackney Co-operative Developments were consulted, helped draw up a report for the Council on how funds could be raised. They also offered to advise and help with money raising and management problems until the nursery is established.

At the moment 30 charities have been written to and some encouraging replies received but so far no firm offers. The Council is not yet convinced that fund raising will be successful, but the group is far from disheartened and would obviously welcome any cash or suggestions!

Care of H.C.D. 16 Dalston Lane, Phone 249-8920

What is a Workers' Co-op?

A workers' co-op is an enterprise run by, and for the benefit of its working members. Such co-ops have a long history and over the years they have evolved certain democratic principles to ensure that they are run fairly in the interests of all their members.

THE FOUR PRINCIPLES

Workers' co-ops are formed by people who want democratic participation in the business in which they are employed. A co-op is an enterprise in which the employees have the control over their working lives which in a private business or company rests with the owner or the board of directors elected by the shareholders. In a private business the employees are told what to do by the owners; in a co-op the workers and employees make all the important decisions themselves. Decisions are made on the principle of one man one vote in a general meeting.

In a co-op the profit or surplus made is distributed equitably among those who work in the enterprise. Before this can be done, however, interest must be paid on the capital invested in the business. This capital may come from the workers themselves who have bought shares in the

co-operative or made loans to it; it may come from non-working members; or it may come from banks or from other co-operative organizations. Interest is paid to owners of capital at the market rate and no more. This is in accordance with the co-operative principle of limited interest on capital.

After interests has been paid the remaining profit is distributed among the workers - usually in proportion to their earnings during the year. The co-operative principle here is that members (workers) benefit from the co-operative in proportion to the work they have done.

Co-ops are organizations which people form because they have a common need. In the case of workers' co-ops this need is one for employment and a desire to work in a justly run enterprise. Co-op members have long held that anyone with the common need should not be excluded from membership on any 'artificial' grounds: whatever their race, creed, or political affiliation, whether they are a woman or a man. New members should be welcomed into the co-op if they genuinely wish to work with others in their mutual interest. While workers' co-ops must always accept this, they sometimes cannot accept new members simply because they have no work available for them. Apart from this one exception, workers' co-ops like all other forms of co-ops are run on the principle of voluntary and open membership.

All workers' co-ops operate with these four basic principles. However there are many variations in the way co-ops are run in practice. All co-ops make their policy and management decisions in frequent meetings of all their members, others - usually the larger ones - have a system of representation. In these the workers in general meetings elect management committees who make general policy decisions and who delegate



Is there anyone who would be interested in trying to set up a co-op garage here in Hackney? Is there a skilled mechanic prepared to work and run such a venture and who might know where there is a suitable garage to rent? Anyone interested should contact Hackney Co-operative Developments at 16 Dalston Lane, E8. Phone 249 8920.

day-to-day control to professional managers.

In all co-ops members benefit in proportion to the work they have done, but some have the rule that working members must buy shares in the co-op. If the co-op is wound up all the assets owned by the co-op are distributed among the shareholders. Other co-ops do not have workers' shares, even if they have worker loans to the co-op, and if the co-op is wound up the assets do not go to the worker-members but to another co-op or to charity.



Who needs a car?

Beat the traffic and rising petrol costs with a shopping trailer from Inventive Structures.

56lb (30kgs) Payload.
23in (57cm) Overall width.
12in (30cm) Diameter wheels.

Rugged ply-wood construction. Large built-in canvas bag, (folds flat for bulky loads.) Swivel-hitch allows for complete control with freedom of movement.

EASILY DETACHED FROM YOUR BIKE - OTHER DESIGNS AVAILABLE - OBTAINABLE ONLY INVENTIVE STRUCTURES, 7 PARKHOLME ROAD, DALSTON, LONDON E8. Phone 249-9938. Open Sat. 10.00-1.00 and by appointment.

Industrial Common Ownership Movement



I.C.O.M. exists to promote common ownership.

I.C.O.M. is a movement of individuals and firms who are concerned with applying common ownership ideals.

Common ownership is an ancient principle; we are applying it in new ways to produce what is in effect a new sort of ownership. Co-operatives are not just successful enterprises. They must have social as well as economic objectives. Our aim is to achieve the ownership and control of an enterprise by those who work in it. We seek to establish common ownership in order to increase the quality of life at work through transforming working relationships.

(ICOM) Ltd. Beechwood College, Elmete Lane, Leeds LS8 2LQ.

Co-ops and the unions.

The rules of many unions state clearly their belief in workers' control in industry...

A.E.U. Rule 1 Objects include:- 'The control of industry in the interests of the community... The extension of co-operative production to assist in altering the competitive system of society for a co-operative system'.

E.E.P.T.U.; Electrical Trades Union Rule 2 Object... 'by legal means and the supporting of legislative action to elevate the moral, intellectual and social conditions of all workers especially by supporting policies which will ultimately give the workers ownership and control of industry'.

T.G.W.U. 'The extension of co-operative production and distribution... the securing of a real measure of control in industry and participation by the workers in management, in the interest of Labour and the general community'. Rule 2

Confederation of Shipbuilding & Engineering Unions. Object 5:- 'To propagate the principle of control of industry by and for the benefit of the Workers'.

BOOTSTRAPS' ENTERPRISE

Bootstrap Enterprises has just acquired permanent premises in Ashwin Street, Dalston Junction.

The new premises are to be shared with the Mutual Aid Training Workshop. They will be ready for use shortly, and will provide Bootstrap with, in addition to a shop, a creche and canteen. Different types of facilities will be available, for example 3 training workshops with tools and equipment for the use of skilled people who are making products for sale and wish to test the market and who also agree to train others, local unskilled, unemployed people (adults and school leavers, with a proportion of disabled workers) will be able to learn and to make goods for sale, with the long term aim of working in one of the seed-bed workshops. Alternatively they could move on to suitable jobs or further training elsewhere. Seed-bed workshops will also be organised which will be used by groups (up to three at any one time) who wish to start operating as commercial co-operative businesses. For an initial period, any group will be able to use the workshop, provided they have the necessary commitment and a

practical business plan for potential sales. Bootstrap Enterprises will assist with recruitment, business advice, joint marketing, bulk purchase of materials, and short-term loan facilities.

A co-operative or democratically controlled structure for the scheme has been chosen, not only because of the co-operative origins of the project, but also because of the very significant benefits to local permanent employment that co-operative structures provide. Co-operatives are more sensitive to the needs of workers and of the community, they are less likely to move from the area and they are less subject to being taken over by outside interests.

Funding and assistance has so far been obtained from a number of charities, from the Inner London Education Authority, from Hackney Co-operative Developments, and from a wide range of companies, at both the local and national levels.

Bootstraps are already working closely with Hackney Co-operative Developments.

Back seats for pensioners?

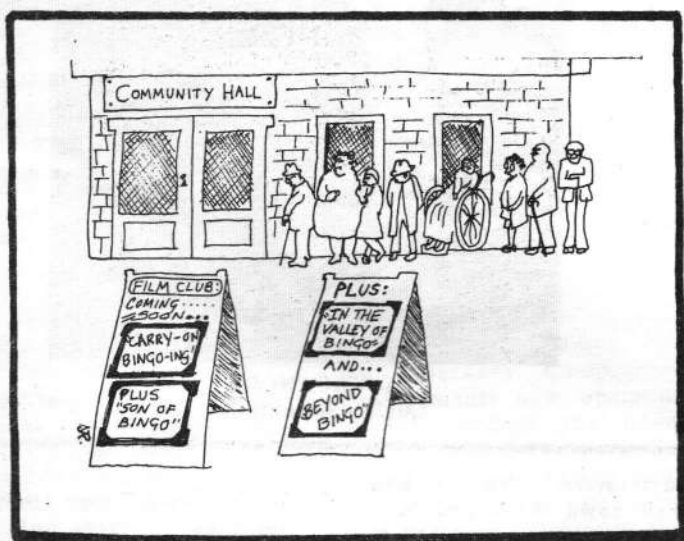
Hackney Co-operative Developments and Task Force, the organisation which fights the pensioners case, are working on a project together. They plan to set up a service co-operative which will bring films to Sheltered Accommodation, Luncheon Clubs, and Homes for the Elderly in Hackney.

The idea is to provide a choice of Golden Oldies, Carry-ons, musicals and thrillers at a reasonable price, allowing members to see films in each other's company in the comfort of their own club. Each club will organise their own fund-raising and a users' committee will choose the films,

many of them only a year or so old, and organise distribution.

Local and national charities are being approached in attempts to raise money to buy a projector and screen. Training sessions will be organised to ensure that the projector is used and maintained properly.

In time the film circuit will be entirely self-sufficient and this extension of the clubs' activities and amenities will encourage them to be more ambitious in other directions. A film circuit, once established, could produce substantial side effects and lead to other projects being introduced.



ROLE OF THE L.C.S.



Support the L.C.S.!

The London Co-op is itself a 'Workers Co-op'. Our roots go back to the 19th century when Railwaymen and other Trade Unionists in London set-up 'Union Shops' as alternative suppliers of reasonably priced unadulterated goods. Today the London Co-op is still democratically controlled by shoppers and staff who join the Society as consumers and who share its profits.

In recent years unemployment; the special problems of London dockland; declining inner-city areas; the High Street battle against private competitors and the Co-op's inheritance of many small uneconomic shops have all taken their toll on profitability.

The London Co-op has voluntarily enforced a Trade Union closed shop agreement for many years, boycotts Chilean goods and refuses to promote South African products. The Co-op now needs Trade Unionists and Socialists to reciprocate and express their solidarity by trading regularly in our shops and involving themselves in our Society's democratic affairs.

As well as its support for the Labour Party; Trade Union Campaigns; Pensioners; Tenants; and Progressive Groups working on international issues, the London Co-op's Political Committee has been especially keen to help promote the development of workers productive Co-ops in Britain.

The Political Committee lobbied MPs to support the Industrial Common Ownership Act and has given practical advice and assistance to enterprises such as UCS (Upper Clyde Shipbuilders), Triumph Meriden, Scottish Daily News, Fakenham, Inter Co-op Language School and a London Taxi Drivers Co-op. The Wandsworth Branch of our Co-op Party has initiated producer Co-ops in its area and encouraged the Borough Council to appoint a Co-operative Development Officer and to set-up a local CDA. We welcome similar moves taking place in Brent, Islington, Hackney and other areas.

TON UP.

There are anything up to 100 industrial co-operatives in London — not including the giant consumer co-ops like, the London Co-op, the Royal Arsenal Co-operative Society (RACS) and the South Suburban Co-op. The diversity of the interests of these industrial co-ops demonstrates the potential for co-operative organisation. These interests range from a taxi-cab co-op established in 1927 and employing 82 people full time, and 40 part time, to the Surrey Docks Farm with 2 full time and 2 part time workers. The Surrey Docks Farm sells its produce, eggs milk cheese etc, as well as teaching children to respect animals through encouraging visits and tours round their smallholding in the heart of dockland.

Many of London's Co-ops are small and are bound to remain that way because of the constraints of the type of business they are involved in, bookshops and food stores for example. This of course is not necessarily a bad thing, a group of friends working in this way might not wish to expand. Larger co-ops exist, particularly outside the London area, Triumph Meriden Scot Bader the chemical firm and Equity Shoes are three such examples.

Many of London's co-ops are to be found operating alongside hard-nosed commercial firms, and yet they still manage their affairs democratically. Workers' participation throughout the whole decision-making process is built into the co-op's

structure and individual co-operators have every chance to suggest changes and new ideas. The Marble Arch Intensive English School works on such a level with 25 full time teachers each of whom serves 6 months as chairperson of the co-op. There are electronics firms organised on co-operative lines. Wandtronics for example produces printed circuits and was set up with help from the Wandsworth Council. The Kennington Cleaners' Co-op comprises 21 women who work a co-operative office cleaning business. It grew from a small group who were fed up with low pay and poor conditions and now has a number of contracts with large office blocks and major firms.

One of the industries which lends itself to co-operative organisation is contracting in the building industry. Many small building firms have gone to the wall over the last few years leaving large gaps in the industry. Many people find that building co-ops are easy to get off the ground because of the relatively low capital outlay involved and there are a number operating in London. Some concentrate on the housing association and 'community' sector whilst others, again, succeed in competing with ordinary firms.

Others have a good chance of expansion if they so choose. There are a number of print shops, for example, which are organised co-operatively, some specialising in community printing, others successfully take on the best 'commercial'

firms at their own game and manage to earn good wages and remain competitive. Women in Print have been going for 5 years in very much a male dominated world, they specialise in work for women's organisations and also manage to train women in printing skills. In Hackney Trojan Press is in the process of being set up with help from Hackney Co-operative Developments, they will be producing badges as well as printing. The Writers and Readers Publishing Co-op publishes all types of books whilst Sabarr Books specialises in books for black children, working closely with teachers and libraries.

There are many popular misunderstandings about co-operative enterprises. It is widely believed, for example, that they are inefficient — but, given the same conditions a co-op can be every bit as efficient as a private business, with no absentee directors to pay and a committed workforce co-ops can be more efficient — after all co-ops have survived when private enterprise has given up. Triumph Meriden for example. It is often said that the democratic control built into co-ops means bad management — again not so! Skilled or specialised managers can be called upon to work for co-operatives whilst ultimate control remains with the member-workers. Finally there is the idea that co-ops don't make profits; what is usually meant here is that co-ops aren't seen to make profits in the same way as private firms — this is because the profits that are made are distributed among the worker-co-operators themselves — or used to build up the co-op's reserves. No single member may ride home in a Rolls but every member has a fair share of the wealth created.

SUCCESS STORY



Some of the workers at Equity shoes

Equity Shoes began its colourful history as a co-operative after the workers were involved in a dispute with their employers — ironically the Co-operative Wholesale Society. They started in tiny premises in Bede Street, Leicester and made a profit of 1s 8½d in the first six months. After differences were patched up, the consumer Co-operative Societies became the best customers of the independent group and close links have been retained to the present day.

The creation of workers co-ops from failed capitalist businesses is not the best condition in which to introduce a new form of ownership which challenges the whole power basis of our society. There are dangers of workers losing savings or redundancy payments and also that they might practice 'self exploitation' by underpricing their labour and working in conditions which would be unacceptable if offered by private employers — it is important that traditional Trade Union attitudes and principles are maintained within the new outlook of a co-operative!

It is also unfair that the State should make a gift of premises and plant to one group of workers and not to others. If it is necessary for the State to purchase a factory then it must retain ownership and lease it to the Co-operative.

The London Co-op Political Committee will continue its support for Workers Co-ops. Further information about our work can be obtained from the Secretary, London Co-op Political Committee, 116 Notting Hill Gate, London W11. Tel: 01-727 9856.

Redundancies and closures: union responds.



Clothing too, once a mainstay of the local economy.

The National Union of Tailors and Garment workers, at the moment struggling flat out to protect its members threatened on all sides with redundancies and lay-offs, has asked Hackney Co-operative Developments to investigate the possibility of co-ops as the solution to employment problems in the clothing industry.

The union had the idea of promoting a clothing co-op many months ago before the current recession really took hold. At the time, the union thought a co-op might provide an alternative to 'sweat shops', homeworking, and other forms of exploitation, common even today in this traditional Hackney trade.

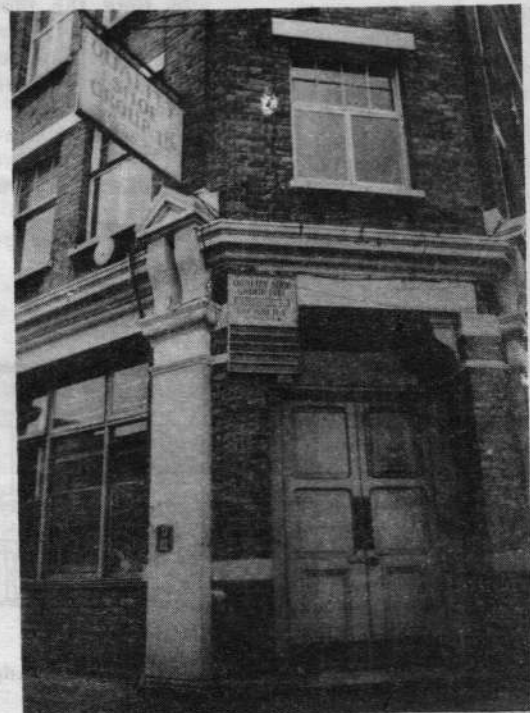
Now that closures and redundancies in private clothing

firms in Hackney are being announced almost daily, the protection of existing jobs and if necessary the creation of new ones is the first priority. Hackney Co-operative Development has engaged professional clothing consultants to carry out a feasibility study for a new co-op and Hackney Borough Council has provided the funds for this.

It is planned that the new co-op would provide employment for 30 machinists at first and that as its reputation grows it will take on many more. Anyone interested in being involved in forming the co-op, particularly if they have machining or managerial experience in the clothing industry should get in touch at once with Hackney Co-operative Developments.



Another of Quality Shoes' vacant factories.



"NO VACANCIES" Quality Shoes today.

SUCCESS STORY.(2)



The 18 strong Cleator Moor Engineering Casting Co-operative was formed in 1977 when the original company failed. They started with £18000 from ICOM and a sympathetic bank manager.

FURNITURE CO-OP MAKES TOP OF TABLE.

Joints Woodworking Co-op

Joints woodworking co-op has taken shape over the last 18 months. It was started by four friends who were frustrated by their present jobs. The initial members of the co-op have variously worked in the furniture industry and building trades. They felt they had no control over their own work and skill in ordinary industry or faceless bureaucracy. They were looking for an outlet for their manual skills coupled with

control over the products they made, an opportunity to acquire new skills and participation in planning their jobs. A co-op seemed to fit the bill — and furniture production was chosen as it matched their skills best and did not need vast amounts of money spent on developing products before the business could become viable.

None of the members had business experience so they spent the first nine months

gradually finding out what made businesses and co-operatives tick. They visited other co-ops who were always very helpful and full of advice and information. Business advice centres helped them learn about cash-flow, marketing and how to appraise and refine the original idea into something that was likely to be successful. They followed up contacts in the furniture trade talking to buyers in large department stores, designers and other furniture

manufacturers. They also tracked down the suppliers of all their raw materials. All these people were very free with their advice and they soon began to get a feel for what was likely to sell and what sort of price the goods should sell for.

Gathering all this information helped to crystallize the initial idea and it soon became clear to them what their products were going to be, what size of factory they would need and what machinery was required. This was all written down in their feasibility study. This document proved very useful later on. By logically setting out the business plan possible areas of difficulty could be identified. Councils and banks also need it when considering grant or overdraft applications. A co-op development agency would have helped the co-op make shortcuts in drawing all of this information together, but at that time no agencies were properly formed.

It soon became clear to them that the co-op would have to be financed initially by the members own personal savings. They each put £750 in to buy the equipment. This was bought mainly at auctions, the odd bargain being snatched up from Exchange and Mart. Grants were available to help them get off the ground: £1000 to register the co-op and to pay for things like legal and marketing advice. They successfully applied to the council for this grant and they will also be eligible for a grant for the first year's rent on their factory. The council proved very helpful and their Economic Development Unit and Hackney Business Promotion Centre are both sources of information.

In the mean time they are designing a range of basic domestic furniture which will be built up over the first years operation. It will be modestly priced for as large a market as possible — pine will be used to keep costs down. They intend to advertise in local and national papers and sell directly from the factory. Occasionally smaller items will be promoted for mail order sales.

They met many problems on the way to starting their co-op but they found that there was always someone somewhere with the time and knowledge who could help. As the co-op grows it will enable more people to share in the benefits of collective control over their own workplace. They will be able to design products and production methods that improve the skill content and job satisfaction — leading to a fairer deal for their customers as well. The co-operative will still face all the problems of competing successfully in the 'market'. They are optimistic about this and feel that their preparation will put them in a strong position to succeed. By creating a system in which the labour of the co-op hires and manages the capital — instead of the reverse, which is normal in ordinary firms — co-ops will inevitably develop in a different way from conventional businesses.

Property has turned out to be their biggest problem yet. The first factory they went for fell through just before they were about to move in. Currently they are negotiating on a property in the south of the borough. Hopefully production will start in April.

BENEFITS

A preview of some of the proposals in the Government's Social Security Bill - and what they really mean

If at the moment you are claiming Supplementary Benefit, or will be in the not-so-distant future, maybe you'd like to know that the Government's Social Security Bill is soon to be given its final reading in Parliament.

The Bill aims to improve and simplify the existing unwieldy machinery of the Supplementary Benefit Scheme, but what measures it proposes to use may not be so beneficial.

Due to the incomprehensibility of the present system, thousands of claimants go without their rights and entitlements. Many in need prefer not to claim, rather than go through the indignities of the means test, and face the often dehumanising ritual of having to prove their obvious need.

On top of this, the Supplementary Benefit Scheme doesn't work because it is trying to cope with far greater numbers than it was intended to. The Beveridge proposals, which set up the National Assistance scheme in 1948, saw

Supplementary Benefit as a safety net for those who didn't qualify for National Insurance, and that it would be phased out when the National Insurance system became fully operational. As Beveridge himself admitted, the Welfare should provide "security against want without a means test". Today, the massive queues inside the DHSS Offices show that the 'safety net' has become somewhat entangled.

Poverty Line

The vast increase in the numbers dependent on Supplementary Benefit since the end of the War is due to the growing numbers of pensioners, one-parent families and unemployed, especially long-term unemployed. In addition, National Insurance Benefits are too low to keep people above the poverty line and many claiming unemployment or sickness benefit are forced to claim Supplementary Benefit as well.

The Government, with its

new Bill, proposes to improve the living standards of claimants - without actually spending any extra money: what it will be doing, in effect, is robbing Peter to pay Paul. The Government admits that a 'small number' will lose out, although this 'small number' turns out to be 1½ million, against the paltry 3 million who will gain. This 'no-cost' Bill, as it has been called, will hardly touch on the fundamental problems of the present Supplementary Benefit System - which are the massive dependence on Supplementary Benefit as opposed to other, non-means tested forms of assistance, and the failure of the system to provide claimants with an income sufficient to ensure, in the words of the Supplementary Benefits Commission, "normal participation in the life of the relatively wealthy society in which we live". The Supplementary Benefits Commission (SBC) admits that the Government proposals are inadequate, and states: "If the reform of the scheme is to be worth-

while, and if the living standards of claimants generally are to be protected and improved, it follows that the 'no-cost' assumptions adopted in the review report must be rejected". It is unlikely that the proposals will be rejected.

Listed below are some of the proposed changes in the Social Security Bill; there are many more that affect immigrants, strikers and several other - working and non-working - groups of people. With a comfortable majority, the Tory government will almost certainly get most - if not all - of the clauses through. But one mustn't hold the Tories responsible for all these proposals: many of them were hatched when the last Labour Government was in power.

THE CHANGES :

A list of some of the changes that are suggested will show just how what 'improvements' there are will be marginal, and will be put through at the expense of other groups of claimants.

while unemployment remains at its present level, and it is unjust to deny them the increase in benefits all others get".

Children's rates

There is to be an increase in the amount a claimant gets for her/his children, as an attempt to increase the falling value of the children's rate in relation to the adult rate. However, it is a sobering thought, that even with these increases, a parent is expected to meet all the needs of a child up to the age of ten on 89p a day!

School leavers

This cursory increase is, in any case, going to have to be paid for by school leavers. Under the proposals, school leavers will not be able to claim Supplementary Benefit until the end of the summer holidays (which, to them, won't be a 'summer holiday'). Apparently, the government considers it "socially undesirable" for children "to enter adult life" by moving straight onto benefit: they probably think they'll turn into professional 'scroungers' overnight. But how can a school leaver even look for a 'decent' job, if s/he can't afford the bus fares to an interview, or is unable to buy overalls or suitable work clothes?

Home helps

Pensioners may be overjoyed that their pensions are to be increased this November "in line with prices"; but the proposals show that what you get in one hand is taken away from the other. They will be interested to know that government no longer proposes to assist with home help charges.

Savings

Also, if you are a pensioner - or anyone else, for that matter - who has managed to scrape together any savings over £2,000 (and in these days of rampant inflation that doesn't count for much anyway), you will be pleased to know that you won't get any benefit; because the government assumes that, for some strange reason, that figure should be a cut-off point above which no benefit should be given - and no questions asked.



Long-term rate

One 'improvement' is the reduction of the qualifying period for receiving long-term supplementary benefit to one year. That means, for example, disabled people and one-parent families will only have to suffer hardship for one year before having their benefit increased to a slightly more tolerable level.

The Government, however, does not believe that those who have been unemployed for several months or longer are entitled to long-term rates of benefit. Why? Because the Government is concerned that putting the long-term unemployed on a higher rate will erode 'work incentives'. Again the 'Why Work?' syndrome rears its ugly head. The vast majority of people who have been out of work for a long period are forced into that position through circumstances they can't control: because they are physically weak or suffer from minor disabilities which prevents them from taking on most jobs; because they have just recovered from a long period of disability and therefore have lost their previous skills; because, in the ever-shrinking job market, what training they once received is now no longer in demand; or, quite simply, because they just weren't able to find a job since they left school.

Even the DHSS review team, investigating the proposed Supplementary Benefit changes, does not share the government's fear that helping the long-term unemployed will stop them looking for work - assuming there is any work. The review team states: "Such people have no chance of securing work

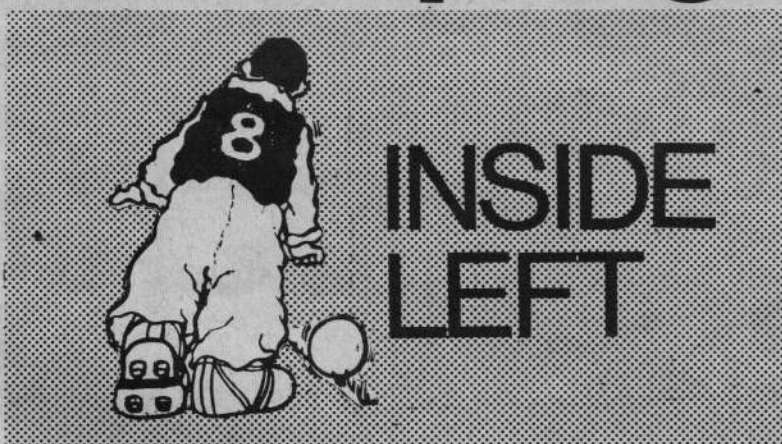
The Rites of Spring

March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb, and in political circles it brings with it that most dreaded of seasons: the Annual Meeting. Strong men and women go weak at the knees, for now is the time that they will meet their come-uppance. Every democrat knows that, however hard he or she climbs what Reginald Bevins (a Tory, by the way) called the "greasy pole", every so often the people have to be faced.

But being politicians, they know that "the people" don't matter. Really you have to impress the fellow toilers in the vineyard, the few dozen people who make the real decisions, that they are capable of carrying on as before. Or, even better, that they should be permitted to pull themselves a little further up. That is where the Party comes in.

ONLY TWO

I told you last month how absurdly easy it is to become a councillor in Hackney. It involves a little matter of joining the Labour Party, first of all, and for that you have to undergo the "Prove you are a Socialist" test. It is now only (only!?) two years before the next round of elections, so you could say that the race is already starting.



This was shown by March's Annual Labour Group meeting. This does a few ritual things like selecting next year's Mayor. Normally we wouldn't be too interested in scooping the 'Ackney by a month or so to tell you who this is going to be but it does have a very important side-effect this year, so I shall tell you whose mugshot you will see gazing at you for the whole of the next twelve months. It is the present chair of the Social Services committee Max Feldman. Now you see why that is so fascinating. The chair of one of the Council's most important committees! (Quiet at the back there, this is where this starts getting interesting!) Who is going to fill this place? Another old hack? Some young dynamic Leftie? Well, I'm afraid that I can't tell you because the Group appointed a Selection Committee (dominated, of course, by the Right) that will meet and select people to fill the various committees.

So who is going to be promoted or demoted this year? Who has blotted his or her copybook: been seen drinking in the Trades and Labour Hall with all those Trots or fallen flat at Royal Garden Parties? The corridors of power echo whispers that have reached my ears. It could be that some chairpersons of some committees are due for the Early Bath. There's a feeling that it's about time that some of the more moderate members of the Broad Left were bought off - sorry, given more responsibility. But some of these Lefties are already suspected of indiscretion and leaking - maybe even talking to Inside Left. (I've got a little clue for my fans, however, don't assume my identity to be the most obvious person. I have many disguises... So the next time you see a will o' the wisp flit past you inside the Town Hall maximum security area, take no notice, it's just me off to yet another Labour Group meeting.)

PROJECT TO GROW?

The Hackney Girls Project first started in November 1978 with a lot of help from a number of people who were interested in providing some kind of facility for girls. We devised a programme of

We have now reached a point in our development where it is no longer necessary to prove the need for a girls project; we know that girls are underprovided for in terms of leisure and recreation facilities. We would now like to expand and acquire premises for a girls centre in Hackney.

THE RIO GRAND

April sees the reopening of the refurbished Rio, now a prominent feature of Kingsland High Street with its striking red and yellow decor. If all goes well, they will be back on screen as early as April 3.

Changes at the Rio have not been limited to the physical structure of the building. The decisions on how to allocate the funds available brought with them considerable dissension in the management committee, six of whom recently resigned after submitting a plea for major changes in policy. In a document intended to be read as a whole rather than as separate proposals, they called for more funds to be spent on the provision of a basement social area rather than on the stage extensions; for a return to a small executive group responsible for the running of the building instead of the present series of sub-groups of the rather unwieldy management committee; and for stronger volunteer representation on the management committee. The document's rejection by the committee was followed by the immediate resignation of its authors.



The cinema reopens with "Animalympics", a full-length cartoon feature with sufficient visual impact to appeal to adults as much as children; double-billed with "The Stick-up", it may well prove to be better entertainment than the real Olympics this time round. Other highlights include the promised return of local blues singer Carol Grimes; after her immensely successful live show in December, she has now been booked for a Saturday night spot. The Monty Python double of "Holy Grail" and "Jabber-

wocky", originally intended for the March programme, has been re-scheduled for April. The Asian programme, run by Hackney Asian Youth, has been expanded. "Rocky 2" will be coming later in the month.

Elsewhere in the borough, both the Konak and the Mayfair have "Apocalypse Now", previewed last month. The Konak precede it with "North Sea Hijack", "Tom Horn" and "When Time Runs Out", while the Mayfair have "Zombie Flesh Eater" and the sci-fi spectacular "The Black Hole" for a fortnight.



It is impractical to operate one evening a week in a multi-purpose building like Centerprise, which has housed us for the duration of the project.

We would like to be able to open more than one evening a week and have space for social activities and workshops. In order to achieve this, we need lots of support and help from women who have skills, and interest, in the continuation and expansion of a girls project.

If you are interested in helping us, please write to us c/o Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High Street, E8.

workshops such as woodwork, electrical, maintenance, music and drama. We had discussions, played pool and records, had social evenings, went to theatre, roller skating and saw films.

Dole group change

Unemployed Unity, formerly Unemployed Cinema - a Rio project - has now formed as an independent, autonomous group.

The aims of the group, broadly speaking, are to place the issue of unemployment in its political and historical context. As a group, we recognise that unemployment is a weapon used to suppress working class people, and not as the media would have us believe the result of personal inadequacy or laziness.

Our activities therefore aim to spread this awareness by way of an information sheet, slide shows, live events, cinema and discussion groups which are open to everybody. We meet in Centerprise every Thursday at 2.00 pm.

For further information contact Josy or Nick Barrett, 143 Evering Road, N.16. (806 8755).

special offer!



Here's an offer you can't refuse!

We are willing to supply you with ten copies of every issue of HPP for ONLY 80p! Just so that you can have the privilege of selling them to your friends or neighbours!

This offer is only open for a limited period - the rest of your life...

We will deliver the copies to your own doorstep, extract 80p from you, and you can sell the hot copies. You make 20p all for yourself!

Isn't that the most wonderful thing you've heard since you got your rate demand? Rush your order today to our Marketing Department at our global headquarters, c/o 136 Kingsland High Street, E8.

We can let you have more than ten copies as well - at the same 20% discount!

ADVERTISEMENT



The Rio Centre, 107 Kingsland High St., E8. 254 6677

APRIL PROGRAMME

Mon 7	THE RESCUERS	1.30	4.00
For 6 days			
Tues 8	All Day Suckers Theatre Group	11 am	8.30
Wed 9/Thurs 10	Crump Theatre of Marbles	11 am	
Thurs 10	THREEPENNY THEATRE	8.30	
Fri 11	Sheer Madness Theatre Grp LENNY + JACKSON CNTY JAIL	11 am 8.30 11.15 pm	
Sat 12	Theatre of Thelma THE SENTINEL + LET'S SCARE JESSICA TO DEATH	8.30 11.15 pm	
Sun 13	Asian Film Programme	12.30 pm	
Mon 14	ANIMALYMPICS + THE STICK-UP	1.30 4.55 3.00	
For 6 days	MONTY PYTHON AND THE HOLY GRAIL + JABBERWOCKY	7.00 8.45	
Fri 18	ACROSS 110th STREET + THE BIG SLEEP	11.15 pm	
Sat 19	YOUNG GENERATION WORKSHOP	10.30 am	
Sun 20	Asian Film Programme	12.30 pm	
Mon 21	ROCKY II + FLESH WATER DIVE	6.00 8.40	
Fri 25	ELECTRA GLIDE IN BLUE + LAWMAN	11.15 pm	
Sat 26	THE GOLEM + DAY OF WRATH	11.15 pm	
Sun 27	WOMEN IN ENTERTAINMENT B'FIT	2.30 pm	
Mon 28	1941 + RESTING ROUGH	7.45	
For 6 days			

information

All listings on this page are inserted absolutely FREE.

The information on this page has been revised and up-dated, but we would welcome any further corrections or additions. For the May issue please send them to us by Friday 25 April. Our address is HPP, c/o 136 Kingsland High Street, E8.

Community, Tenants and Pensioners Groups

HACKNEY PENSIONERS ASSOCIATION
34 Dalston Lane, E8
Advice service on Tuesday and Thursdays from 10.30 to 4pm. Tea Bar Monday to Friday 10.30 to 4pm.

TASK FORCE
34 Dalston Lane, E8. Tel. 254 1620
Free advice for pensioners in Hackney. Odd jobs and visits in N16 and N4 only. Pensioners' activities and neighbourhood care in N5.

HACKNEY ASSOCIATION FOR WELFARE OF OLD PEOPLE
22 Dalston Lane, E8. Tel. 254 0715

HARAMBEE 2 PROJECT
74 Downham Road N1.
Social and advice centre, aimed particularly at black people.
Tuesday 10am-10pm
Thursday 10am-4.30pm
Friday 10am-10pm

OFF CENTRE
25 Hackney Grove, E8. Tel. 985 8566
Advice for young people between 13 and 25 with any problems.
Monday-Friday 10am-6pm (open until 8.30pm on Thursdays).

FRIENDS ANONYMOUS SERVICE
Friendship House, 27 Hackney Grove, E8.
24 hour telephone service with people always willing to listen and act.
986 2233 (24 hours)
985 0973 (office hours)
986 9146 (office hours)

FEDERATION OF HACKNEY TENANTS ASSOCIATIONS
Represents Borough, GLC, housing assocn and private tenants.
Contact Terry Robinson, 380 Old St, EC1. 739 3631.

HACKNEY HOUSING ACTION GROUP
contact 249 2281 or 249 8715.

ACORN TENANTS ASSOCIATION
Represents New Islington & Hackney Housing Assocn tenants.
Contact Terry Robinson. 739 3631

Ecology

HACKNEY FRIENDS OF THE EARTH
Active group, campaigning on safe energy, bikes, wildlife, recycling etc. Contact Jim Read, 67 Fairholt Road, N16. 802 0122.

HACKNEY ANTI-NUCLEAR GROUP
Open to all those wishing to combat nuclear power.
Meets every other Thursday in Centerprise. Contact 226 1799

SUN POWER ECOLOGY CENTRE
83, Blackstock Road, N.4.
Bookshop specialises in the environment, cooking, health, education, childrens' books; also crafts and some wholefoods. 01 226 1799

HACKNEY SOCIETY

An amenity group, affiliated to the Civic Trust, concerned with Hackney's environment and architecture.
Meets on the third Monday of each month.
Details from Chairman, David Batchelor, Tel. 985 7937
or Secretary, Robert Hill, 75 Glyn Road E5 Tel. 986 8761.

Women

HACKNEY SOCIALIST FEMINIST GROUP
Meet alternate Mondays at the Factory, Matthias Road, N 16, at 7.30pm. Contact Pat 254 5821 or Harriet 254 6208.

RAPE CRISIS CENTRE
Tel. 340 6145. 24 hour information and advice.

HACKNEY ABORTION CAMPAIGN
Meetings fortnightly at 20 Parkholme Road, E8. Contact 249 3768 for details.

HACKNEY COMMUNIST PARTY WOMEN'S GROUP

Meets monthly - talks, films, activities. For information phone Nathalie 254 9508.

OFF CENTRE
Drop-in centre for Young Unemployed.

Free snacks, use of telephones and newspapers. A meeting place for the young unemployed.

Off Centre Basement.
25 Hackney Grove, E8.
986 4016.

Community Centres

CENTERPRISE
136 Kingsland High Street, E8. Tel. 254 9632.
Bookshop and office hours:
Tuesday-Saturday 10am-6.30pm.
Coffee bar and meeting room hours:
Tuesday-Friday 10am-9.30pm.
Saturday 10am-5.30pm.

FACILITIES:
Coffee bar; bookshop; advice, information and contacts for individuals and groups. Typewriters can be used free, duplicating at cost price. Ask in General Office.

ADVICE CENTRE:
Legal and welfare advice session on Thursdays 6.30-7.30pm.

READING CENTRE:
For adults who find it hard to read or write. Contact Sue Shrapnell or ring 254 9635.

PUBLISHING PROJECT:
Publishing books by people who live in Hackney.

WALLY FOSTER CENTRE
Homerton Road, E9. Tel. 985 3972.
Community Centre with many activities:
SOCIAL SERVICES ADVICE CENTRE: every weekday 9am-5pm.
ADULT LITERACY CLASSES: Every Monday at 7pm.
Also playgroup, mothers and toddlers group, pensioners lunch club, school welfare advice, youth club for 5-8 year olds, Kung Fu and juvenile dance classes.
See also **ADVICE** and **NEIGHBOURHOOD ENGLISH CLASSES** listings.

THE FACTORY
107 Matthias Road, N16 (next to Newington Green School). Tel. 249 3066.
Runs mothers and toddlers clubs, sewing classes, English classes, youth club, childrens' drop-in group (creche provided), after school club, arts and crafts club, pensioners lunch club, food co-op and an Indian dance class.
Contact them for further details.

THE FAMILY CENTRE
50 Rectory Road, N16. Tel. 249 8334.
Information and help for all community problems. Cooking, washing, creche facilities. Mothers and toddlers group on Thursdays, 1.30-3.30pm (homeworkers especially welcome). "Encourage your child to read" class on Mondays, 5.30-7.30pm. Supplementary school now operating. Classes on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. Contact them for further information.
Also see **ADVICE** and **Neighbourhood English** Classes and **Gingerbread** under **COMMUNITY GROUPS** listings on this page.

HOXTON HALL
128a Hoxton Street, N1. Tel. 739 5431.
Runs playgroup, pensioners lunch club, legal advice centre, after-school junior club and writers' workshop as well as evening classes in shoe repairing, dressmaking, pottery, crafts, old-time dancing and singing. Also Women's Discussion Group and the Hoxton Drama Group.
Many events take place in the theatre each month—see the **EVENTS AND MEETINGS** section. Also see **ADVICE** listing.

CHATS PALACE
42-44 Brooksby's Walk, E9.
986 6714. Meeting space, bar for club members, duplicating, workshop, clubs, classes, jazz, music hall, supplementary school, youth activities, hall for hire.

Education

ADULT LITERACY SCHEMES
For details of adult literacy courses in your area contact:

Carol Morris, BETHNAL GREEN AEI, 229 Bethnal Green Road, E2. 739 7790.

Donald Kenrick, CLAPTON AEI, Brooke House, Kenninghall Road, E5. 985 9646.

Graham Morris, HACKNEY COLLEGE, 249 7221.

June Hewes, HACKNEY LIBRARIES, Shoreditch Library, Pitfield Street, N1. 739 5153.

Sue Shrapnell, HACKNEY READING CENTRE, 136 Kingsland High Street, E8. 254 9635.

Cal Weatherald, HIGHBURY MANOR AEI, Jack Ashley School, Blackstock Road, N4 226 9190.
John Rake, HOXTON HALL, 128a Hoxton Street, N1. 739 5431.

HACKNEY LANGUAGE SCHEME
Teach the kind of English needed in day-to-day life. Classes operate throughout Hackney. For further information contact Annette Giles, 249 1496, or call at the Family Centre, Rectory Road, N16 on Thursday mornings.

Meditation

TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION
Partnership for Progress in Hackney: regular introductory talks. Ring 254 6280 for details.

ANANDA MARGA
1 Cazenove Road, N.16.

For spiritual progress and social change.
Meditation classes for men Wednesday 8.00pm
Meditation classes for women Tuesday 8.00pm and Wednesday 2.00pm.
Sewing class Tuesday 7.00pm.

Advice

Free legal advice on housing, landlord and tenant, employment, social security, welfare, matrimonial, immigration and discrimination problems can be obtained from the following centres:

CENTERPRISE
136 Kingsland High Street, E8. Tel. 254 9632.
THURSDAYS 6.30-7.30pm.

HOXTON HALL
128a Hoxton Street, N1. Tel. 739 5431.
WEDNESDAYS 7-8pm.

KINGSMEAD
Wally Foster Centre, Homerton High Street, E9. Tel. 985 3804.
TUESDAYS 7-8pm.
STOKE NEWINGTON ADVICE GROUP SERVICE.
102 Manor Road, N16. Tel. 800 3710.
MONDAYS & WEDNESDAYS 7-8pm.

ALLEN ROAD
12 Allen Road, N16.
THURSDAYS 7-8pm.

Advice can also be obtained from:

HACKNEY ADVICE BUREAU & LAW CENTRE
236-8 Mare Street, E8. Tel. 986 8446
Open Monday-Friday 10am-5pm (7.30 on Thursdays).
Legal aid and advice on housing, rents, repairs and employment problems.

CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX
1-11 Hoxton Street, N1. Tel. 739 4654.
106 Old Street, EC1. Tel. 253 2155.

HACKNEY COUNCIL FOR RACIAL EQUALITY. 245 Mare St, E8.
TUESDAYS 7-8.30pm.
Immigration, discrimination, housing law and other problems. 986 4121.

THE FAMILY CENTRE
50 Rectory Road, N16. Tel. 249 8334.
Information and help in all community problems. Cooking, washing, creche facilities. Open all day.

HOUSING ADVICE CENTRE
302-4 Mare Street, E8. Tel. 986 8123.
Helps with all housing problems. Repairs, rebates, landlord/tenant, council/tenant.

HACKNEY CENTRAL INFORMATION BUREAU
Town Hall, Mare Street, E8. Tel. 986 3123.

HACKNEY NORTH LABOUR PARTY ADVICE CENTRE
5 Stamford Hill, N16.
Advice and information on legal, financial, welfare, housing, social security and personal problems.
FRIDAYS 7-8pm.

RECTORY HOUSING AND WELFARE ADVICE CENTRE
Family Centre, 50 Rectory Road, N16.
Help with housing, employment, health and social security and community and race relations problems.
SUNDAYS 10.30am-12.00 noon.

Advice can also be obtained from **HARAMBEE 2 PROJECT**, **OFF CENTRE** and **FRIENDS ANONYMOUS**. See Community Groups listing on this page.

For MPs and councillors Advice surgeries see **LABOUR PARTY** under **POLITICAL GROUPS** listing on this page.

Arrested? Helping enquiries? Evicted?

EMERGENCY LEGAL SERVICE

Ring 986 9891. 24 hour free legal service from 6pm Friday over whole weekend.

Workshops

THE WORKSHOP
81 Lenthall Road, E8. Tel. 254 3082.
Print your own posters and T-shirts. Cost of materials only. Open by arrangement.

COMET WORKSHOP
Halcomb Street, N1. Tel. 729 0936.
Learn sewing, macrame, toymaking, woodwork. Creche available, toy library. Tea and coffee. Open every weekday.

WORKSHOP
77a, Lauriston Road, E.9.
01 986 9585 Open 10.00 - 6.00 Mon. - Sat.

Pottery workshop and shop selling ceramics and pottery handmade in the workshop. Also Macrame plant hangers, jewelry, cards and other crafts.

Gays

GAY SWITCHBOARD
Tel. 837 7324. 24 hour information and advice.

EAST LONDON CHE (Campaign for Homosexual Equality)
East London CHE welcomes gay women and men. For details phone John, 504 1110 or Kate, 539 2331.

GEMMA
Gemma Group for Disabled Lesbians, including older women. Contact BM Box 5700, London WC1V 6XX.

Transport

HACKNEY PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACTION COMMITTEE

Meets regularly to discuss how to improve public transport in Hackney. Contact Tony Jacobs, 3 Hockley House, Morning Lane, E9. Tel. 986 2303.

HACKNEY CYCLISTS ACTION GROUP
Contact Tessa Bain, 10 Kynaston Road, N.16. 254 4559

Health

CITY AND HACKNEY COMMUNITY HEALTH COUNCIL
Shoreditch Health Centre, 210 Kingsland Road, E2. Tel. 739 6308/8351.
The public's voice in the NHS—provides advice, takes up your complaints and criticisms. Open meeting on 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6.30pm. Publishes **HEALTH IN HACKNEY**: a comprehensive FREE guide to health facilities and services in the area.

HANDICAPPED CHILDREN IN HACKNEY
Advice, ideas, information. Trying to contact all families in district with a handicapped child. Contact Ann Pardon, 48 Mount Pleasant Lane, E5. Tel. 808 8438.

Volunteers needed at: Huddleston Centre, St James the Great Church, Lower Clapton Rd. E.5. 01 985 8869.

THE BIRTH CENTRE
188 Old Street, EC1. Tel. 251 4076.
Information, advice, lectures and seminars on birth at home and in hospital. Open evening every Wednesday 8pm. 25p.

EAST LONDON WOMEN'S HEALTH GROUP
c/o 116 Albion Drive, E8.

STOKE NEWINGTON HEALTH GROUP
Local people interested in all matters concerned with health. Contact Alan Clarke, 21 Kynaston Road, N.16. 254 3277.

COMMUNITY HEALTH FOUNDATION
188 Old Street, EC1. 251 4076.

WOMEN'S NATIONAL CANCER CONTROL CAMPAIGN

Hackney & District branch. Meets at John Scott Health Centre, Green Lanes, N4. Contact Rose McNulty 800 3108 (evenings) or Hilda Burd 800 2124 (anytime).

Children

HACKNEY UNDER FIVES
136 Kingsland High Street, E8.

Information and support for parents with children under school age. Stores open on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Open monthly meetings on 3rd Tuesday of each month. Tel 254 9145.

HACKNEY PLAY ASSOCIATION
136 Kingsland High Street, E8. Tel. 254 9145.
Information, advice and help to people organising play facilities for children. Contact Lillian McPettridge

CHILD CARE BULLETIN COLLECTIVE
112b Forest Road E8.
Publishes bulletins and pamphlets about child care and related topics. Collective is open to anyone interested. Contact 226 0817 or 254 2227 for details of next meeting—with creche.

Food

TOWARDS JUPITER
191 Mare Street E8. 985 5394
Wholefood shop also selling books and crafts.
FOOD FOR ALL
3 Cazenove Road, N16. Tel. 806 4138.
Wholefood shop, also selling books and crafts.

SHANTI VEGETARIAN RESTAURANT
1 Cazenove Road, N.16

Vegetarian meals.
Wed, Thurs and Fri 7.00-9.00pm.
Sat 12.00-2.00pm.
Full vegetarian meal 65p.

Vegetarian cookery classes:
Wed 5.30pm and Sat 10.30am.

Music

POETRY AND MUSIC CLUB
The Chatterbox, 1a, Chatterton Rd, (off Blackstock Rd.) Finsbury Park, N.4.
Weds. 8.00 - 11.00 p.m.
All welcome. 20p admission. Performers free.

ISLINGTON & HACKNEY MUSIC WORKSHOP
Sing-song third Thursday every month, 8pm. Free.
Ring Dave 249 0025.

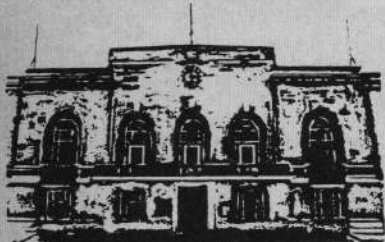
HOME GROWN MUSIC
Chats Palace every Thursday at 8.00pm. 50p admission. Floor singers should contact John Lockhart on 986 6714.

HACKNEY CHESS CLUB
Weds. 7.30pm - 10.30pm
Fri. 7.30pm - 10.00pm
Centerprise Daily
Tues. - Sat.

For any information contact T. Wilson, 135, Manor Road, N.16 5PB.



CUTS MADE VIA BACK DOOR



... continued from p.1

known that this small cut would mean that the whole Housing Investment Programme was in jeopardy. The Leader, Martin Ottolangui, assured them that this was not so, and that the leadership did actually oppose cuts in the capital housing investment programme. The money to meet the interest repayments would be found from somewhere, he said. So that amendment was withdrawn.

Then Eddie Millen summed up and moved a formal vote. Seven hardline Left-wingers voted against the rate increase, along with "lone Tory Joe". Presumably they will all be summonsed to the headmasters study for a little bit of group discipline. Touch your toes, boys and girls! Yaroo, you cads!

THIS MONTH IN HACKNEY

The women's section of Hackney North and Stoke Newington Labour party is holding a JUMBLE SALE on Saturday 26 April at 2 pm at 5 Stamford Hill, N16, admission 5p. If you have any jumble you want to get rid of, please ring 249 1713.

SOLIDARITY WITH THE STRUGGLE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA -

Saturday 17 May

2 - 5 p.m. Film, poetry and discussion. Emphasis on the links between black people's struggle in Southern Africa and the fight against racism in Britain.

7 p.m. Fund raising social in aid of medical aid for S.W.A.P.O. Admission '1 Live music or disco, food.

At Dalston Trades Hall, Dalston Lane, E.8.

Organised jointly by H.C.A.R. and Hackney & Islington Anti-Apartheid Group.

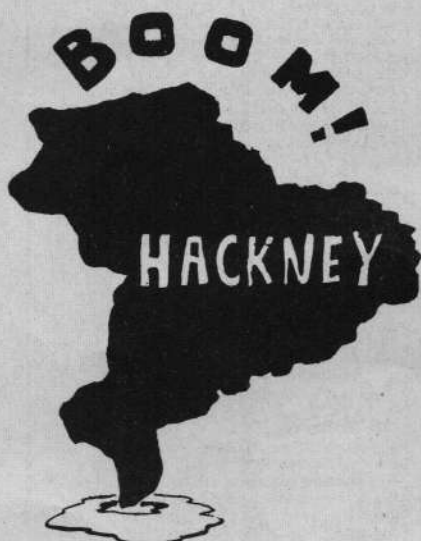
How Hackney prepares for Big Bang...

If the bomb were to drop on Hackney tomorrow what would you do? How would you protect yourself and your family from the effects of radioactive fall-out if you were to be one of the lucky ones who survived the initial blast? More to the point, what arrangements are being made by Hackney's councilors to see us through the disaster that we all hope will never happen?

Hoping that it will never happen will be the best safeguard, in fact, since Hackney Council spends only £1,200 a year on "home defence planning". Three quarters of this amount is reimbursed by central government so Hackney Council itself only foots about £300 of the bill. There is no full-time officer working on civil defence precautions.

Why is there this apparent lack of concern for the safety of Hackney's residents when, as revealed on "Panorama" recently, every new house built in Switzerland has its own underground shelter and even the London borough of Hillingdon has regular "dress rehearsals" in preparation for nuclear attack?

Ever concerned about the



end of civilisation as we know it, HPP rang deputy Council leader, John Kotz, who gave two reasons. The first is the unlikelihood of the success of makeshift attempts at self-preservation in the face of the holocaust which will follow a nuclear attack. The second is that it will be our peace-time services that we the fire brigade and hospitals - the very services

will need most - the ambulance service, the police, that the present government is drastically cutting back.

As Mr Kotz points out, the government can distribute all the "Protect And Survive" booklets it likes, but where is the person living in a tower block going to find the amount of earth necessary to build an indoor shelter and what good will it do him or her on the 18th floor? He says that it is the standard of living now that we should be worrying about. We should spend what money we have on services rather than waste it on possibly useless defence and our government should follow a foreign policy which will go all out to avoid war. Finally, Mr Kotz would like to add that he does not have personal access to any deep shelter.

"Get the story right this time," he ended his conversation with us. Always anxious to oblige, all we can say is that Council policy seems to be the old Cold War proverb: In the event of nuclear war, put your head between your knees and kiss your ass goodbye!

How the country nearly went up with Big Bang

While Hackney makes its preparations for the nuclear holocaust, the Government, or at least part of it, does not seem to know whether it put the country on a high-grade nuclear alert on 23 January or not. On 29 January the Government strenuously denied a report in the newspaper "The Scotsman" that a nuclear alert had been called. But on 6 February in correspondence with a private individual Malcolm Rifkind, Under Secretary at the Scottish Office, admitted that an alert had taken place. He said: "I cannot agree... that the decision to put the country on a high grade nuclear alert last week was irresponsible."

While justifying nuclear alerts in general, according to the normal Tory line, he went on: "The whole point of such an action is in no way to increase the likelihood of conflict but to ensure that in the event of aggression by the Soviet Union that our own defence response is fully prepared to meet any potential problem."

This letter adds weight to the original story in "The Scotsman" that an alert had been called when the Government learned of the tough contents of President Carter's "State of the Union" message, due to be broadcast on 23 January. In spite of the official denial "The Scotsman" stood by its original story, in which they said that, apparently all the relevant officials were told to be ready to move into their bunkers. Some had even entered their bunkers, the report said. But whether

It seems that Rifkind realised that he had boobed. He wrote again on 21 February to say that "there was absolutely no function for this report". He offered no explanation as to why he should have defended supposedly non-existent government actions. The person who received the letters pointed out that Rifkind was "clearly either a liar or an incompetent." Perhaps both.

People's News Service.

small ads

ADVERTISE IN YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER!

If you are thinking of selling your bike, stereo, pet fish or indoor swimming pool HPP could work for you! For a meagre 3p a word the columns are yours. Ads must be pre-paid. Cheques or postal orders to Hackney people's Press, c/o 136, Kingsland High Street, E.8. Ads for May issue to be received by Friday 25th April.

The Rio Centre, a community cinema in Dalston, requires three full-time workers with general responsibility for running the project but with particular responsibilities for each of the following areas:

1. House Management
2. Administration and Community Liaison
3. Programming

Salary AP4. (£5369 - £5793) 35 hour week. For more details and application form please apply to Rio Centre, 107 Kingsland High Street, E8. 254 6677. Closing date: 21 April

TROJAN WORKERS CO-OP

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PANJANDRUM - please come back, all is forgiven. Send last months answers as soon as poss. (and take that Capital radio sweatshirt off).

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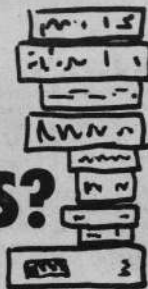
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TOWN HALL FOR SALE!
Due to cutbacks in public expenditure Hackney Town Hall must go! 32p o.n.o. Contact M. Ottalangui, Hackney Town Hall, Mare St, E.8. Closing date April 1st 1980.

HACKNEY INDEPENDENCE DAY - April 1st 1980
Celebrations start in Mare Street, 12 noon. Socialism in one borough arrives at last! Guest speaker: David Green (the Robert Mugabe of Hackney). All welcome.

Worried about that train at the bottom of your garden? Scared of the PWR development programme? For your cardboard cut-out shelters and all home defence needs apply: Ministry of Defence, Whitehall, SW1 enclosing large SAE.

TOO MANY BOOKS?



Tired of them falling off shelves or out of cupboards?

Give them to HPP's GIANT BOOK SALE, to be held in Centerprise on Saturday 17 May at 2pm.

We will come and collect them from you if you ring us on 249 0311 (eves) or 254 1306.

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS

HACKNEY PEOPLE'S PRESS is an alternative non-profit making monthly newspaper produced by an open group of people who live or work in Hackney. We publish the paper because we believe that Hackney needs an alternative to the commercial press to serve the real interests of its people. We have no editor and no shareholders and no one is paid by the paper.

HPP is your newspaper: anyone who lives or works in Hackney is welcome to come and help us. All decisions are made collectively.

We hold meetings every Monday (except the last one in each month) at 8pm in Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High Street, E8. You can come along to one of these meetings and volunteer to help us write, produce or sell the next issue - or simply tell us what you think of the paper.

If you can't come one Monday then write to us c/o Centerprise or ring 249 0311 any evening or weekend.

HPP is sold through various newsagents and shops throughout Hackney. If you think that your newsagent would like to sell it, on sale or return, then please

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